

# Fertilizing The Lawn

Nearly everyone appreciates a well cared lawn. To achieve the healthiest green lawn, many people turn to chemical fertilizers. Unfortunately, lawn fertilizers pose several risks to human health and water quality.

Hazardous chemicals in fertilizers include ammonium nitrate, ammonium phosphate, ammonium sulfate, pesticides and potassium chloride. Fertilizers can be corrosive to skin, eyes and mucous membranes and can potentially affect water quality.

## Fertilizer Use

When using fertilizers, read labels carefully to ensure that you are properly protected and that you use the right amount of fertilizer for your lawn. Don't fertilize before a predicted heavy rain and be careful along lawn edges. Fertilizer left on sidewalks and driveways can easily be washed into storm water.

It is suggested that slow-release fertilizer is less-hazardous. Look for bags that have the word "WIN" on them. This indicates that the fertilizer contains water insoluble nitrogen.

## Leftover Fertilizer

If you have fertilizer left over, store it in a sealed and labeled plastic bag and keep it away from children, pets and water.

If you don't want to store it, it is best to find someone who can use it.

## Disposal

Empty fertilizer bags that do not contain pesticides and weed killers can be disposed of in the garbage. If the fertilizer contains pesticide, please follow directions under "pesticides" on your product's label to dispose of properly

If you can't find any way of using up the product, you may dispose of it by placing it in a heavy duty plastic bag and contact the **South UT Valley Solid Waste District 801-489-3027**.

## Reducing The Need For Fertilizer

You can reduce the amount of fertilizer you need by frequently mowing your lawn with a mulching mower to a height of three inches and leaving the clippings on the lawn.

Using compost and soil amendments also reduces the need for fertilizer. Information on organic fertilizers can be obtained from the Utah State University extension link at <http://extension.usu.edu/hm/horticulture>